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OFFICE OF
PAT MILLER

Nov 18, 2004

2004 NOV 23 AM 8:56

NOV 22 2004

RE: 2004 Docket #'s 04-00166 and 04-00211

T.R.A. DOCKET ROOM

TN REGULATORY AUTHORITY

Dear Sir or Madame:

The Tennessee Regulatory Authority Docket 04-00166 and 04-00211, if approved could allow higher rates for calls from inmates at Tennessee jails and prisons. I am urging you to support the children and families of prisoners and vote against any increases in cost and possible decreases in the time length of calls from state or local penal institution.

Families of Tennessee prisoners are the forgotten victims of crime. Innocent of any wrong doing, they too often suffer in silence. It is therefore very important that elected and appointed government officials protect our interests. Our families are primarily responsible for telephone and many other expenditures of our incarcerated loved ones. The proposed changes would result in drastic telephone rate increases that we cannot afford. We also cannot afford to stop improving our family relationships through regular-30 minute telephone calls. Healthy family bonds during imprisonment help to reduce repeated incarceration and ultimately make our communities safer for all Tennessee families. To shorten the length of the calls would be devastating to family bonds. Affordable local and long distance calls are especially critical for families who are not physically or financially able to visit prisons that are often in remote locations where public transportation is not available and over night accommodations and meals would drive up the cost. I am also concerned that the current telephone provider, Global Tel-Link lacks accountability to its customers. We insist that improved customer service and better billing service are required of all telephone service providers to prison and jails of Tennessee.

As a concerned citizen, I will be watching these issues very closely. I earnestly hope you will support families of Tennessee's prisoners and not the interest of big business.

Sincerely, *Linda Day*

Linda Day
119 Webster Rd
Lake City, In 37769

November 17, 2004

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Sincerely,

Angela R. Dabbs
Angela R. Dabbs

P.O. Box 1073

Warburg, TN. 37887

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Sincerely, *Jerry Day*
Jerry Day
119 Webster Rd
Lake City, TN 37769

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PAT MILLER

November 1st, 2004

2004 NOV 23 AM 8:56

NOV 19 2004

RE 2004 Docket #'s, 04-00166 and 04-00211

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Sincerely

*Martha E. Woods, Mother
of RMSI Inmate*

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T.R.A. DOCKET ROOM

Shirley Fox
206 Cedarwood Dr
Antioch TN 37013

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PAT MILLER

NOV 19 2004

TN REGULATORY AUTHORITY

Chairman Pat Miller
Tennessee Regulatory Authority
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37243

Re; 2004 Docket #'s 04- 00166 AND 04-00211

To : Pat Miller

I am aware of the Tennessee Regulatory Authority Docket 04-00166 and 04-00211, if approved it could allow for higher rates and shorter time length that families, lawyers and love ones would have to share.

I am urging you and your staff to support the children, lawyers and families of prisoners and vote against any increase in cost and any possible decrease in the time length of calls from a state or local penal institution.

Families of Tennessee prisoners are the forgotten victims of crime. Innocent of any wrong doing, they too often suffer in silence. It is therefore very important that elected and appointed government officials protect our interests. Our family are primarily responsible for telephones and many other expenditures of our incarcerated love ones.

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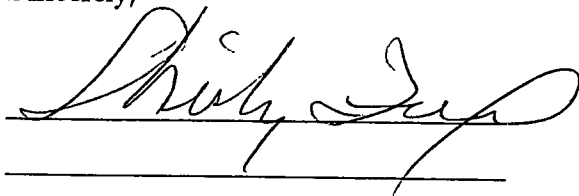
incarceration and ultimately make our communities safer for all Tennessee families.

To shorten the length of the telephone calls would be devastating to family bonds and almost impossible for an incarcerated love one to communicate with attorneys through via telephone. Affordable local and long distance calls are especially critical for families and attorneys who are not physically able to visit prisons that are often in remote locations where public transportation is not available and over night accommodations and meals would drive up costs.

I am also concerned that the current telephone provider, Global tel- link lacks accountability to its customers, as I am sure that counselors that provide communication to Global tel can account for this to be a true complaint with being put on hold for long periods of time when trying to clear up problems that an inmate cannot do for him/her self and through counslers being their only way.

As a concerned citizen and family to an incarcerated love one, I will be watching these issues very closely. I earnestly hope that you and your office will support the families of Tennessee prisoners and not the interests of big business.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ruby Sup", is written over a horizontal line. Below this line are three additional horizontal lines, which are currently blank.

Jan Wyatt
903 Cardigan Dr.
Smarna, In 37167

Chairman Pat Miller
Tennessee Regulatory Authority
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37243

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Sincerely,

Jan Wyatt

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Alex Friedmann
5341 Mt View Rd #130
Antioch, TN 37013
(615) 255-5357 • (615) 545-0490 cell
alex36@hotmail.com

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*Former Co-Chair, Restorative Justice Coalition of Middle Tennessee, Steering Committee, Tennessee Regulatory Authority
Public Safety and Justice Campaign, Vice-President, Private Corrections Institute*

November 12, 2004

SENT VIA FAX AND MAIL

Pat Miller, Chairman
Tennessee Regulatory Authority
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37243-0505

RE: TRA Docket Nos. 00-00166 and 00-00211

Dear Chairman Miller

I am contacting the Tennessee Regulatory Authority in reference to the above docket entries, specifically as they relate to raising the cap on inmate local collect calls to \$1 50 per call from the current \$1 00 per call (a 50% increase)

I find it ironic that phone service providers such as Global Tel*Link and Evercom are seeking a cap increase for inmate local collect calls in order to generate additional revenue. When these companies contract with local and state government agencies (e.g., the Tennessee Department of Correction) to provide inmate phone services, they pay a percentage of their revenues to the agency – as high as 40%. This contractual kickback means that phone service providers can generate a profit based on up to only 60% of their revenue, since the remainder is paid to the contracting agency.

If inmate phone service providers feel they need to boost their income they should re-negotiate their contracts with the agencies to which they provide phone services, in order to reduce their kickback percentage. Additional revenues should not come from prisoners' families who overwhelmingly are the ones who must pay the inflated rates that these companies charge.

It is even more ironic that inmate phone service providers are seeking a cap increase for local collect calls when, in the past, companies in this industry have been repeatedly sanctioned for overcharging prisoners' families. In 1997, the Florida Public Service Commission ordered MCI to refund overcharges on collect calls made from

Florida correctional facilities, to settle the claims MCI paid a \$10,000 fine and put \$189,482 into an inmate fund. In 1996, San Antonio-based North American Telecom agreed to refund \$400,000 overcharged to those who accepted inmates' collect calls. In Louisiana the state Public Service Commission ordered Global Tel*Link to refund \$1.2 million in overcharges from June 1993 to May 1994. And if my memory serves correctly, Global Tel*Link was found to be overcharging customers in Tennessee, too.

In seeking a cap increase for local collect calls from correctional facilities these companies are, essentially, seeking to legalize their practice of overcharging. Since calls made from prisons and jails are routed through an automated computerized system with no operator assistance, it is hard to understand why such calls are inordinately expensive, as phone service providers often claim.

Regardless, increasing the profit margins of multi-million dollar telecommunication companies should not be borne on the backs of prisoners' families – especially when such companies kick back a large percentage of their revenues to state and local agencies in order to win and retain their highly lucrative inmate phone service contracts. These agencies, including local jails, thus stand to profit through increasing the cap on inmate collect calls, hence the comments filed by the Tennessee Sheriff's Association.

It would be poor public policy to increase the cap for local collect calls made from correctional facilities when inmate phone service providers have not shown there is a compelling need to do so. Simply noting that Tennessee has one of the lowest local collect call rates in the nation is not a compelling reason, some state must have the lowest rate, and Tennessee should be commended for being progressive in this area.

I am sure you already are aware of research indicating that regular communication between inmates and their families promotes reintegration into society after prisoners are released with a corresponding decrease in recidivism rates, therefore, I will not belabor this point. I will, however, include with this correspondence a copy of comments filed with the FCC by the Utility Consumers' Action Network (UCAN), a California-based non-profit agency. In an unrelated matter, UCAN filed a complaint against MCI for overbilling inmate phone services. On May 4, 2001, the California Public Utility Commission ordered MCI to refund \$522,485.00 in overcharges on collect phone calls made by California prisoners to their families.

For the reasons stated above I urge the TRA to deny the pending petitions as they relate to increasing the cap for local collect calls made from correctional facilities. Thank you for your time and attention in this regard,

Sincerely,



Alex Friedmann

Enclosure